1: Roth--70
116, 727, 789

(No date) 1890

Tasmanians

"The following curious fact is extracted from West (p. 87): 'A gentleman, on guard during the black war, watched a small group in the gaol yard round their night fires. One of them raised his hands, and moved them slowly in a horizontal direction; and spreading, as if forming an imaginary fan or quarter circle: he turned his head from side to side, raising one eye to the sky, where an eagle hawk was soaring. The action was accompanied by words, repeated with unusual emotion; at length they all rose up together, and uttered loud cries. The whole action had the appearance of an incantation.'"

1: Roth--94-95 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 727

"'After killing a white man, the natives have a sort of dance and rejoicing, jumping and singing, and sending forth the strangest noises ever heard. They do not molest the body when dead, nor have I heard of their stripping or robbing the deceased' (Widowson, p. 191). Other authorities, however, do not agree with Widowson as regards the non-mutilation of the dead. Calder expressly states (Journ. p. 21): 'In fight, the vengeance of the savage was not appeased by the death of an enemy. The mutilation of the body, and particularly of the head, always followed, unless the victor was surprised or apprehended surprise. This was done either by dashing heavy stones at the corpse, or beating it savagely with the waddie.' When Mr. Meredith's father's stockman was killed, 'All his finger-joints were broken, and his body brutally mutilated, according to the usual custom of the blacks, when not hurried or disturbed in their deeds of horror' (ch. xii.); and when the Hooper family was killed, the same author gives the following account: at 'the cottage, where, lying all around, frightfully mangled and full of spears, were the dead [95] bodies of Hooper, his wife, and all their children. They had hammered their bones in pieces, broken their fingers, etc., etc.'"

"Occasionally they seem to have spared women; thus Backhouse mentions the following incident: 'We passed the remains of a hut that was burnt about two years ago, by the aborigines of the Ouse or Big River district. An old man named Clark lost his life in it, but a young woman escaped; she rushed from the fire and fell on her knees before the natives, one of whom extinguished the flames which had caught her clothes, and beckoned to her to go away. They killed a woman on the hill behind the hut. A few weeks after they surrounded the house of G. Dixon, who received a spear through his thigh, in running from a barn to his house' (p. 30). Calder states (Wars, p. 56): 'They [the aborigines] were naturally opposed to taking the life of a female.' ... A Mrs. Cunningham having been murdered by Le-ner-e-gle-lang-e-ner, chief of the Piper's River tribe, 'a Cape Portland native, who was staying at the time with the Piper's River fellows, ... when he heard of the death of this woman, spoke very disapprovingly of it, adding that "the men of his tribe never killed a white woman."' If, on the one hand, there was an inclination of the part of some males to spare white females, so there was on the other hand a disposition on the part of the Tasmanian females to save life where possible. We have already seen in this chapter two cases where the native women did so save life; and with regard to the murder of Mr. Parker and Captain Thomas, Calder says: 'The demeanour of the women... was only what they always displayed on occasions like this.

They were seldom present at a fight, unless it was an unexpected one, being always left behind, as many have thought, for their safety, but really because their presence was embarrassing to their husbands; for, with rare exceptions, they were against excessive violence being done; and it would not be difficult to give instances where their interposition in stopping it was more successful than it was at this time' (Wars, p. 83)."